



## Hearing Aid Dispensers Bureau

### Mail Order/Internet Hearing Aids

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CONSUMER INFORMATION SHEET 5

**Purchasing a hearing aid by mail order/internet may seem inexpensive, but there could be hidden costs.**

**Know your rights and the seller's responsibilities:**

- California law provides that mail order/internet hearing aids may only be purchased through a dispenser licensed by the California Hearing Aid Dispensers Bureau.
- The law states that when hearing aids are purchased by mail order/internet there must be no fitting, selection or adaptation of the instrument.
- By law, the seller may give no advice with respect to the taking of an ear impression (ear impressions are made to ensure the proper fit of a hearing aid).
- The law also requires that, prior to purchasing a hearing aid through mail order or the Internet, you must provide a statement signed by a physician, audiologist or licensed dispenser that verifies direct examination of your ear.

***To verify a dispenser is licensed or find more helpful consumer information, visit the Bureau's Web site at [www.dca.ca.gov/hearingaid](http://www.dca.ca.gov/hearingaid).***

**Beware of potential risks:**

- To work effectively, hearing aids must fit right. If a mail-order/internet sale doesn't involve personal contact with a licensed dispenser, it's difficult for you to benefit from a proper fitting.
- Follow-up evaluation, which is important to ensure the hearing aid is working appropriately and meeting your needs, probably isn't available.
- It may be difficult to get a refund from an out-of-state seller. According to California law, if you are not satisfied with a hearing aid, and the hearing aid has not been specifically fit for your particular needs, you may receive a full refund if you return it to the seller within 30 days of receipt.

**When preparing to purchase a hearing aid, remember to:**

- Always deal with a licensed Hearing Aid Dispenser, to take best advantage of California's consumer-protection laws. Ask the dispenser if they're licensed in California, call the Bureau or check the Bureau's Web site to verify license status.
- Read the fine print on advertisements. If a pitch seems "too good to be true," it probably is.